Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (currently amended) ~~Optical~~ An optical fiber cable comprising:

(a) an optical fiber bundle comprising a plurality of longitudinally extending optical fibers spaced from one another,

(b) ~~an~~ a solid polymer encasement having an essentially circular cross section and ~~surrounding~~ encasing each of the plurality of optical fibers , the solid polymer encasement having an elastic modulus greater than 210 MPa at 23 ^{O}C so that stresses on the encasement are effectively translated to the optical fiber bundle.

2. (canceled)

3. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fibers each have centers and the center-to-center spacing of nearest neighbor optical fibers is at least D + 20 microns, where D is the diameter of the optical fibers.

4. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fibers each have centers and the center-to-center spacing of nearest neighbor optical fibers is in the range D + 20 to D + 150 microns, where D is the diameter of the optical fibers.

5. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fiber bundle comprises optical fibers randomly spaced.

6. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 5 with 1-8 optical fibers.

7. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 6 with four optical fibers having centers on the corners of a square.

8. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fiber bundle comprises at least 3 optical fibers, the optical fibers having centers, with the centers lying on a common axis.

9. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 additionally including an additional polymer layer over the encasement.

10. (currently amended) The optical fiber cable of claim ~~6~~ 9 wherein the additional polymer layer has an elastic modulus of at least 210 MPa at 23 ^{O}C.

11. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the minimum thickness of the encasement measured from the outside of an optical fiber to the outside of the encasement is in the range 50-500 microns.

12. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the encasement is low-density polyethylene.

13. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the

encasement is essentially void-free.

14. (previously presented) The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the encasement is oval in cross section.